A FULL and PARTICULAR

ACCOUNT

OF THE

Life and Notorious Tranſactions

OF

ROGER JOHNSON,

CONTAINING,

I. His early Inclination to all Manner of Villanies, the roguiſh Tricks he play'd even while a Boy.

II. His getting acquainted with a Gang of Thieves Pickpockets, *&c.* that at that Time infeſted the Playhouſes, *&c.* his firſt meeting with the noted Mrs. *Jolly*, and cohabiting with her.

III. His dreſſing himſelf in the Habit of a *Parſon*, and the ſeveral Pranks he play'd in that Diſguiſe.

IV. His turning Smugler, and the remarkable Bite he put upon two Cuſtom Houſe Officers.

V. His being ſeiz'd and committed to *Newgate*; his Behaviour there, and a particular Account of his Eſcape from thence with *Fiſher*.

VI. His being apprehended a ſecond Time; His Diſcharge from thence, and living *honeſtly* as a *Pawnbroker* to the Time of his Death, *Aug.* 22.

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THE LIFE OF *ROGER JOHNSON.*

NATURAL Curioſity incites in us a Deſire of enquiring into the Lives and Actions of thoſe who have, in any Shape, render'd themſelves famous or infamous in the World: When a JONATHAN WILD, or a MACRAY, meet the juſt Reward of their Villanies, tho' we approve of their Puniſhment, and abhor their Crimes, yet, at the ſame Time, it is a ſecret Satisfaction to hear an Account, how ſuch Men have perpetrated thoſe Villanies, and gull'd the Unwary, as it may, in ſome Meaſure, enable us to be upon our Guard, if any ſuch Attempt ſhould be made upon us.

As no one hath been more conſpicuous in the World, for a long Series of Tricks and Impoſtors, tho', notwithſtanding that, he had the Luck to eſcape from the End that uſually attends a Life ſo ſpent; yet, we believe, it will be no unprofitable, or unpleaſant Thing to the Reader, to be acquainted with the Methods, which a Man hath taken, to go on ſucceſsfully in Scenes of the greateſt criminal Exceſs, and capital Offences for near Five and Forty Years together, and yet die in Plenty, and peaceably in his Bed at laſt, which was the Caſe of *Roger Johnſon*. And this, we hope, will ſuffice as an Apology for this Relation; and further to evince that the Subſtance of it is true, we muſt beg Leave to acquaint the Public, that we had this Account from a Perſon, who knew him from his Cradle; and who, not only knew ſeveral of the Facts to be real, but who has had the Relation of them oftentimes from *Johnſon*'s own Mouth, during his Confinement in *Newgate*, and ſince his Enlargement.

ROGER JOHNSON, was the Son of *William Johnſon*, a Taylor, in the Pariſh of *St Clement's Danes*. His Father was not in any extraordinary Circumſtances; for as he labour'd hard at the Needle for a ſmall Subſiſtence, his Mother being a good induſtrious Woman kept a little Stall in *Clare Market*, and there ſold Butter and Eggs, and might, in all Probability, have continu'd doing ſo ſtill, had they not been led away by their unlucky Son *Roger* to their Ruin, as we ſhall ſhew hereafter.

Roger's Inclination to Villany diſcover'd itſelf in his early Age, before he could well ſpeak plain; but being grown big enough to go to School,

School, his Parents put him to one Mr. *Stevens*, who kept a School in St. *Clement's Lane*. He had not been there long, before he behav'd in ſuch a Manner, that his Maſter declar'd, he would keep him no longer in the School: And, after repeated Trials for his Amendment finding him no better, he abſolutely refus'd to admit him into the School, upon any Account. *Roger* upon this, was taken Home, and cloſely confin'd, in Order to ſee, if they could do any Thing to reform him, or keep him ſome Time till they could find an Opportunity of ſending him to Sea; but *Roger* (tho' he was then very young) found Means of giving his Keepers the Slip, and would run away from them for whole Days and Nights together. His uſual Haunt was in St. *Clement's* Church-Yard, which, at that Time, was a Sort of a Nurſery for all Manner of young Thieves; and here he imbib'd his firſt Principles in that *Art*, in which he was ſince ſo great a Proficient; for here he met with ſeveral looſe and diſorderly Boys like himſelf, who under Pretence of aſſembling together to divert themſelves with harmleſs boyiſh Games, would get into the more pernicious ones of Huſſel Cap, Thimbles and Balls, *&c.*

Roger's natural Bent and Inclination to Miſchief, would not let him be long idle, and being a Lad of a great Spirit, and a good Deal of Cunning, it is not to be wonder'd at if he quickly ſurpaſs'd his Companions. He knew it was cuſtomary for the Children to have Half-Pence given them to buy Hot Rolls, or ſomething for their Breakfaſts, as they went to School on cold Mornings; but *Roger* could not bear, that they ſhould be provided for, and he not; he therefore ſet his Wits to work in Order to get it from

from them; he provided himſelf with a little Stool and a Trencher, and planted himſelf in the Corner near the Pump in St. *Clement's Lane*, and here he lay to catch ſeveral who had been his Schoolfellows, and inveigle them to play at his Thimbles and Balls till he had cheated them of all their Money, and he has often declar'd, that he had taken then as much Pleaſure in ſending the Boys hungry to School, without Money as he hath ſince in ſome of his more labour'd Artifices.

But to give a greater Proof of his daring Spirit and enterprizing Genius, even at this Age, we ſhall relate the following Story. *Roger* was weary of preying upon ſuch ſmall Game as Boys, look'd out for others; and one Day, being fixed, with his Stool and Trencher, in the Court, near Doctor *Burgeſs*'s Meeting Houſe, as was then: He ſat ſome Time without meeting with any Sport, was at laſt tir'd with his Situation, and was going, but he ſpy'd a Footman coming down the Court. He was Servant to a noted Counſellor in *Lincoln's Inn*. His Maſter had ſent him with Seventeen Pounds to pay off a Tradeſman's Bill, and he like a Fool came down the Court playing with the Money in his Hand, *Roger* was tempted with the delicious Morſel, and tho' he had never made ſo bold a Puſh before, yet he reſolv'd at any Rate to be Partaker of the Caſh; by his artful Inſinuations he drew the Fellow in to play with him, and it is reaſonably to be imagin'd, that the Footman, ſeeing one ſo young, might not expect ſo much Cunning from *Roger*, and might be fill'd with the Hopes of winning the Boy's Money: However *Roger* prov'd too hard for him in the End, and by the artful Management of the Thimble

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and Balls blinded the Fellow in ſuch a Manner, that he got all the Seventeen Pounds from him, but to ſhew the Generoſity of his Spirit, he gave the Footman Half a Crown to drink his Health, and went away rejoicing, leaving him to curſe his Fortune, and go Home to his Maſter on a ſleeveleſs Errand. But this Adventure, in the End, prov'd of ill Conſequence to *Roger*, for he was ſo fluſh'd with his good Succeſs, that he could not contain himſelf, or help *flaſhing the Cole*, as he us'd to call it. *Roger*, at that Time, had a Brother living, but who died ſome Time ago: *Roger*, in the Fulneſs of his Heart ſhews him his Handfull of Money, and offer'd to let him partake of it. The Brother, who was not only a little older, but a little honeſter than *Roger*, was ſo far from accepting his Offer, that he ſuſpecting, in what Manner *Roger* came by ſo much Money, thought proper to acquaint his Father and Mother with the Affair, *Roger* was ſeverely ſcrutiniz'd and call'd upon by his Father to know, how he got that Money? *Roger* made a lame Excuſe, and ſaid he got it of a Boy by toſſing up, but being of an obſtinate Temper he would confeſs nothing further, notwithſtanding his Father us'd all Methods; and finding good Uſage ineffectual, after laſhing him heartily, he bought a ſmall Chain and Lock, and faſten'd the young Gentleman to the Bed's Poſt, and in this Condition he remain'd ſome Time, yet he would not confeſs in what Manner he came by the Money. After having been thus chain'd a conſiderable Time, his Father and Mother being gone both Abroad, and *Roger* impriſon'd thus by himſelf, he thought now or never was the Time to contrive his Eſcape. Accordingly, after a good deal of Trouble he found Means to pick

the

the Lock, and run away. His Father when he came Home was greatly ſurpriz'd at his being gone, and after a fruitleſs Search and Enquiry where he was fled to, he, with the utmoſt Regret, gave him over entirely for loſt, and as one abandon'd to all Manner of vicious Courſes.

Roger, being now quite got looſe from his Friends, got in amongſt a Gang of Thieves and Pickpockets that uſually lurk'd about the Playhouſe Doors and Paſſages of a Night, and being idling about *Lincoln's Inn Fields*, and gaming all Day, *Roger* lay idle upon their Hands a conſiderable Time, which they diſliking, and the Search being pretty well over from his Friends, he ventur'd to creep out of his Covert, and put himſelf into Practice; accordingly he took his firſt Commencement in picking Pockets, *&c.* about the Playhouſes, but he had not been long enter'd, before he became more expert than any of his Companions, and he was grown ſuch an Artiſt that he was reckon'd the only Lad in *England* for *filing a Lob*, or *nailing a Tilt*, that is, in their cant Language taking a Gentleman's Snuff Box out of his Pocket, or ſnatching his Sword from his Side: It is needleſs to enumerate the ſeveral Things he got, or the Feats he perform'd, if it was poſſible to be done, but they were ſo many that he himſelf hath often declar'd, that he could not repeat a Hundredth Part of them; it is ſufficient to ſay, that he was reckon'd the moſt expert of them all at his *Buſineſs*, and not only made a *comfortable* Subſiſtence thereon, but was reckon'd to be worth Money, having ſuch a Reputation among the Profeſſors thereof, but much more the Money he had acquir'd made him agreeable to ſome of the Fair Sex, who had lifted themſelves in the

the Undertaking, tho' ſetting aſide thoſe Qualifications, *Roger* had a Perſon capable of alluring Ladies of much ſtricter Virtue than theſe uſually profeſs, and which afterwards help'd to forward the uncommon Succeſs he oftentimes met with, as we ſhall ſhew preſently.

Roger was grown up to that Age, which in thoſe of a ſoberer Caſt of Life, incites them to Actions of Gallantry, and the inordinate gratifying of their looſer Paſſions: No Wonder then, that in one who had no Reſtriction on himſelf, but who ſacrific'd every Thing to the Bent of his Inclination, they broke out into greater Sallies of Intemperance than in other People; or that among ſuch as the Gang *Roger* was then in, no Diſtinction was made: The Men were wicked, and the Women were lewd; *Roger* had a handſome Perſon, and a conſiderable Deal of Money; no Wonder therefore if he was Favourite to ſeveral of them. Amongſt the Reſt, one *Madam Jolly*, the moſt conſpicuous amongſt them, ingratiated herſelf into his Favour; ſmall Ceremonies were requir'd in adjuſting their Affairs, and where Love is upon ſuch Terms as theirs, their Contracts are eaſily form'd and as eaſily broke: However, ſhe perſuaded her Huſband (as he then paſs'd for) Mr. *Johnſon*, that picking Pockets was a little below his Character, and that as now he was capable of appearing in a more reputable Light, ſhe thought it would be more to his Character to be a Houſekeeper, not only that but it might be of Service to the Gang, by giving them a Sanction upon his Appearance ſometimes. Purſuant to her Advice, he accordingly took an Houſe of CIVIL RECREATION, in the Hundreds of *Drury*.

Both *Johnſon* and his *Wife* were ſo well known that they did not long want Cuſtom. All the Ladies of that Order were conſtantly there, and they got conſiderable Profits by their Buſineſs, and they continu'd together for ſome Time, but *Roger* being of a roving Diſpoſition in Love as well as in all other Affairs of Life, ſoon grew uneaſy of his new Spouſe, and look'd out for freſh Amours: He was a Man of a good Preſence and a facetious Companion as we obſerv'd before: Therefore it is not to be ſuppos'd that in that Claſs of Life he could be long without entering into freſh Amours. He was quite tir'd of Mrs. *Jolly*, and to make up his Affairs and part with her, he knew not how, but ſuch an Aſcendancy had his lewd Inclinations got over him, that notwithſtanding all thoſe Obſtacles he was determin'd to purſue his Reſolutions.

In the Courſe of his keeping the Punch Houſe in *Drury Lane*, he became acquainted with a certain Butcher's Wife in *Clare Market*; *Roger* behav'd in ſuch Manner that he ſoon alienated her Affections from her Huſband, and in ſhort ſhe left the poor Man, and cohabited with Mr. *Johnſon*, Mrs. *Jolly* was immediately diſcarded, and *Roger* now thought himſelf quite happy in his new *Wife*. But to ſhew, that Perſons in that unhappy Station of Life are never free from Uneaſineſs, it will not be amiſs to relate the following Circumſtance.

Notwithſtanding Mr. *Johnſon*'s having commenc'd Houſekeeper, it did not prevent his following his old Practice, for he ſtill could not forget the Sweets of the Money he got by it, and he has often declar'd, that it piqu'd him in ſome Meaſure to think, that as he was the greateſt Proficient in his Way, he ſhould ſuffer others

through

through his Indolence to creep in; ſo that he was continually trying a little to keep his Hand in; but this was attended with ill Conſequences, for one certain Night, he had *nail'd a Gentleman of his Tilt*, that is, he had taken his Sword, and *Roger* was ſo cloſely purſu'd that he had much ado to make his Eſcape, but his Ingenuity aſſiſted him, and ſeeing a Stand of Coaches and near them a Crowd of People gather'd together about a Ballad Singer, he crept under one of the Coaches, and getting in among the People he ſtood as unconcern'd as one of the Hearers; for he had given the Sword to one of his Companions, whom he always had attending him upon theſe Occaſions; and by this Means he eſcaped for that Time, but however the Riſque he run had made ſuch an Impreſſion on him, that when he began to think with himſelf how well he was known in that Employment, and that after ſuch a narrow Eſcape as this, he ſhould be more cautiouſly watch'd, and a ſtricter Search than ever made after him, he thought it high Time to look out for another Way of Living.

When a Man once gives himſelf up to bad Ways, he never can quit them, but flounders on in the Mud ſtill deeper and deeper. And thus was it with *Roger*; but he now began to lay his Schemes more cunningly: He got acquainted with a Set of People, who come from a neighbouring Nation, and who are all *Gentlemen*, notwithſtanding they live by Thieving and Tricking all Mankind; for it is reckon'd a particular Ingredient in the Qualification of a Thief, that if he is not actually one, he ſhould at leaſt be acquainted with an IRISHMAN. *Roger* accordingly introduc'd himſelf to ſome of them, and

being a Man of a good Perſon and Appearance, and a ready Wit they agreed to admit him into their Society, and accordingly he was initiated into their Myſteries at a certain Houſe, where they have a weekly Meeting, not far from *Temple Bar*. They had ſeveral different *Lays* which they went upon, and ſome were to ſet up for Gentlemen, and to endeavour to marry ſome old Woman or other with a good Fortune, which if they effected they were to pay Part of it into the Stock or Fund of the Society, as all their Expences were bore by them, and they were equipp'd out at the Public Charge: *Roger* was pitch'd upon to go (what they call) *Preaching the Parſon*, that is, he was to be dreſs'd up like a Parſon to travel the Country, and by pretending that he fell ſhort of Money upon the Road, except ſome Broad Pieces, which he preſerv'd, and was going to make them a Preſent to his Daughter, or ſome ſuch Thing; and ſo to prevail on ſome credulous Perſon or other to lend him the Worth of them 'till he could ſend for them again, and then by artfully conveying falſe Pieces in the Room of the real ones, he would cheat the poor unwary Wretches who truſted him.

Roger being accordingly equipp'd in his Sacerdotal Robes, and provided with ſome large Pieces of Money; ſuch as your Five Moidore, and Five Guinea Pieces, and likewiſe with ſome Pieces of Lead of the ſame Size, a ſufficient Quantity ſeal'd up in the ſame Paper, he ſet out upon his Expedition, but as he was to appear in a handſome Manner, *Roger* thought it proper to have a Footman with him, eſpecially as he imagin'd, that an Accomplice in his Villany might be of Service to him; for which Purpoſe

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he made Choice of an *Iriſh* Fellow, who is ſtill living, and reputed as cunning a Sharper as any about Town, and having dreſs'd him up in a genteel handſome Livery, he purſu'd his intended Scheme. Their Method was, they would go to the beſt Inn in a Country Town, and then it was the Footman's Buſineſs to enquire, who was the richeſt Man about the Place, particularly if there were any old Miſers fond of hoarding Money. The Footman, having perform'd his Part, was to give the Maſter the beſt Intelligence he could, which among innocent Country People, (who expected no Deceit, eſpecially from the Parſon) he ſeldom fail'd of getting. *Roger* being let into the Circumſtances of the Affair, was to go and addreſs himſelf to the Perſon deſigned to be made a Prey of, and tell him, that he was a Clergyman in *London*, and perhaps ſometime make Uſe of the Name of ſome Gentleman of Worth and diſtinguiſh'd Character in the Church, whom he imagin'd was not known there, and ſhewing him the Pieces of Money would tell the Old Cuff, that they were Family Pieces, which he had a great Value for, but that falling ſhort of Money upon the Road, he was oblig'd to beg the Favour of him to advance him ſo much Money, and keep the Pieces till he could ſend for them from *London*, but begging him not to part with them, which that he might be ſure of, he deſir'd he might ſeal them up with his own Seal, and while the Fools were telling out the Money, or perhaps turn'd their Heads another Way, he would convey a Piece of Paper of the ſame Form as the other, with the leaden Pieces in it, inſtead of the Gold. His Clergyman's Habit made them imagine, that ſo much

much Villany could never be hid under ſuch a Diſguiſe.

Once as he was travelling in this Manner about the Country, he and his Footman going to a Village ſomewhere towards *Norwich*, went to an Inn, and enquiring in their uſual Manner, they were inform'd of an old miſerly Gentlewoman near the Place, who was very rich, but very crook'd and Deform'd; Mr. *Johnſon* and his Man adjourn to her Houſe, and applies himſelf to the old Lady, who ſeeing him to be a clever likely Man, invited him and his Man to come in, *Roger* finding he could not come readily at what he wanted, accepted her Offer, and after having diverted the old Woman with ſeveral Romances and Stories, he pleaſed the old Woman ſo well that ſhe made Love to *Roger*, inſtead of waiting for his making Love to her. Notwithſtanding which he ſtaid there four or five Days before he could compleat his Deſign; One of which particularly was a *Sunday*, the old Woman was ſo pleas'd with *Roger* that ſhe dreſſed herſelf in her beſt Attire which had not ſeen Sun nor Moon for ſome Years before, and very kindly invited *Roger* to go to Church with her, he was obliged to comply, tho' at the ſame Time his Inclinations had they been known led him to a Baudy Houſe, rather than a Church, in the mean Time *Roger*'s Man was induſtrious in ſpreading abroad, that his Maſter was a Miniſter in *London*, had a good Living, and came down there on Purpoſe to court the old Gentlewoman. However, they went to Church, the Congregation could not help ſtaring though in the Time of Divine Service, to ſee *Roger*, ſuch a handſome Man making Love to an old decrepid Wretch, fitter for her Grave, than a Marriage Bed. *Roger* began to be very uneaſy,

for

for fear he ſhould be diſcovered, before he had brought his Deſign to bear; he told the old Lady that he was under an Obligation to be in *London*, on the *Wedneſday* following, and pulls out his Paper of Gold, telling her, that he was oblig'd to pay Fourſcore Pounds in his Way to *London*, that he would leave her ſome Family Pieces in the Room of the Money, that he would come down in a Week's Time, and viſit her again, and return her the Money, the old Woman very readily told him he was welcome to the Money without leaving any thing but *Roger* preſſed the old Woman earneſtly to take the Family Pieces, ſo that the old Lady at laſt accepted them, *Roger* pulls out his Seal to ſeal them, and takes Care to ſecure the golden Ones, and give her the leaden Ones. His Man, in the mean Time, had got the Horſes ready, and *Roger* having accompliſh'd the End of his Courtſhip and Addreſſes mounted his Horſe, and took his Leave of the old Lady, with a Promiſe of being with her again ſoon.

Another Time, as he was riding thro' a little Village, conſiſting of ſcattering Houſes far from any Church, a poor Woman runs out of a Houſe, and ſeeing *Roger* in a Clergyman's Habit, ringing her Hands, and crying, for God's Sake, Sir, alight off your Horſe, come in and baptize a Child that is dying, or it will go out of the World without a Name; *Roger* was a little put to his Trumps here; but, however, he brought himſelf off by ſaying, that he could not do ſuch a Thing in another Man's Pariſh, but that he would ride to the next Miniſter, and ſend him; accordingly *Roger* rode away to the Miniſter's Houſe, and knocking at the Door, who ſhould come to it but the Miniſter's Wife, and while he

he was relating the Story to her, the Miniſter himſelf came down, and deſir'd him to alight and come in: *Roger* told him the Affair, and the Miniſter agreed to go and baptize the Child, but was in ſome Diſtreſs becauſe his Horſe was at Graſs, and he being old and infirm could not walk there in any reaſonable Time, *Roger* very complaiſantly ſaid, he would lend him his Horſe, and would ſtay there till he came back. The Parſon very gladly accepted the Offer, but, I believe, had he known the Reaſon of *Roger*'s Complaiſance he would not have been very eaſy at it; for *Roger* had obſerv'd by the ſparkling Eye of the Parſon's Wife, that a little Love and Youth would not be diſagreeable to her; and accordingly when the Parſon was gone, he began to accoſt her in an amorous Strain; in ſhort there was no great Difficulty in the Affair, the Parſon was old and feeble, *Roger* was young and vigorous, and the Wife not averſe to ſoft Paſſions; ſo that long before the Parſon return'd, they had gratify'd each other's Inclinations, and *Roger* was ſufficiently ſated with his Exerciſe, and the Parſon had good Reaſon to remember the Chriſtning of the poor Woman's Child, for that Day Nine Months he had one of his own to perform the ſame Office to.

His Fame, or rather Infamy, was ſo ſpread about, and his Face ſo well known over all the Country, that he found it abſolutely Neceſſary to find out ſome new Employment; upon caſting up his Accounts he found that he had got conſiderably by theſe Practices, which made him very loath to quit it; but as there were many Reaſons why he ſhould, he accordingly came to *London*, and bought a Sloop, or ſmall trading Veſſel, he fitted her out in a very handſome Manner, and made

made ſeveral Voyages to *Holland*; but not being well enough vers'd in Trade, he found but little Account in that; ſo that he concluded upon turning *Smugler*, This Buſineſs he carried on for ſome Time with wonderful Succeſs, without Meeting with any Oppoſition, tho' he narrowly eſcaped ſeveral Times; once in particular he ſerv'd two Officers of the Cuſtoms in a very odd Manner; for having got a great Parcel of Run Goods on Board, he was by contrary Winds forc'd near *Dover*, where a Cuſtom Houſe Sloop brought him to, made him caſt Anchor, and put two Officers on Board him; *Roger* was very uneaſy at this, and determin'd at all Events to get out of their Clutches: Night coming on the Wind chopp'd about favourable for him, and he conſulted with his Mate, whether or no they could not cut away the Cable, and run away to *Dunkirk*; accordingly they agreed ſo to do, and the better to carry on the Deſign, *Roger* invited the two Officers into the Cabbin to drink a Bowl of Punch, and then ſetting his Back againſt the Door, with two Piſtols in his Hands he ſtood Sentry over them; in the mean Time the Mate cut the Cable, and got the Veſſel under Sail. The Officers were very uneaſy without Doubt in that Situation, expecting nothing leſs than Death, or to be flung over Board, but *Roger* aſſur'd 'em that if they would be quiet, no Harm ſhould come to them, they would only carry them to *Dunkirk*, and put them on Board ſome Veſſel that ſhould bring them back again: And in this he kept his Word with them; for he ſet them down there without mentioning what they were, as knowing that if he had told, when he came to *Dunkirk* that they had been two Officers of the Cuſtoms, the Smuglers there would certainly

have kill'd them. This was afterwards Part of the Extent which he was charg'd with in *Newgate*, and he was forc'd to compound with the Officers, and give them a Sum of Money not to proſecute him.

His natural fickle Temper ſoon made him weary of this Way of Buſineſs, and having met with ſome Loſſes, inſomuch that he began to be reduc'd: He was diſhearten'd from following Smugling any longer, and ſet his Head upon Coining. In Purſuance of this, he got acquainted with one *Stone*, a Coiner: They furniſh'd themſelves with all neceſſary Implements for Coining, and went on *Jehu* like for ſome Time, *Roger* found Money come in again plentifully once more, and indulg'd himſelf in all Manner of Extravagance: He then married a Woman, one of his old Acquaintance. Nor was he content in following theſe wicked Courſes himſelf, but he drew in his Father and Mother to be concern'd with him; the old Folks being but poor, and ſeeing the Money come in ſo eaſily, and hoping to eſcape without Diſcovery, agreed to aſſiſt their Son and *Stone* in Coining: They went on for ſome Time with uncommon Succeſs, but all Villany ſome Time or other is ſure to be diſcover'd, *Stone* in putting off ſome of the Money was detected and apprehended, *Roger* reaſonably concluded, that he could not long be ſafe, and accordingly flew the Pit, *Stone* was tried and convicted, and executed accordingly; however, *Roger* eſcap'd a little longer.

And here it is not amiſs to inform the Reader, that *Roger* had beſides Coining been ſuſpected and accus'd of ſeveral Robberies on the Highway, particularly for robbing one Mr. *Pitts*, of which he was acquitted; but tho' he had the good

good Luck to eſcape himſelf, yet he was fatal to his Friends, for the noted *Jonathan Wild* was firſt apprehended upon a Warrant granted, on Suſpicion of taking a Bribe for letting him eſcape, and huſhing up a Robbery which he was charg'd with, and tho' they could make nothing of that, yet he was detain'd upon that Warrant till they charg'd him with the Indictment for which he ſuffer'd Execution; *Roger* abſconded for ſome Time, and kept himſelf conceal'd pretty well, till thinking the Search pretty well over, and that the Affair of the Coining was all at an End, when *Stone* was dead, he ventur'd to take an Alehouſe in *Chapple ſtreet*, *Weſtminſter*; and there he did very well, and got Money, and continu'd a long Time undiſcover'd, 'till unfortunately for him, one *Kelly*, who was an Evidence againſt *Jonathan Wild* went to hire himſelf to *Roger* as a Servant, and as ſoon as he ſaw him knew him, *Roger* was oblig'd to take him then, for Fear he ſhould betray him: Accordingly he hir'd him, and they liv'd very friendly together for ſome Time, till at laſt they quarrell'd, and *Kelly* to be reveng'd on his Maſter, went immediately to Juſtice *Vaughn* in *Southampton-ſtreet*, diſcover'd *Roger*, and made an Information of the whole Matter, and upon that poor *Roger*, not imagining he was betray'd, was taken up, and committed to *Newgate*, and his Father and Mother likewiſe, and his Wife was ſent to *New Priſon*. *Roger* could not at all brook Confinement, and from the Time he went in, thought of nothing but how to get out. He was at firſt put on the Common Side, then remov'd to the Maſter's Side, and having rais'd a Sum of Money to make a Preſent to Mr. *Allen* the Keeper, he was at laſt allow'd the Li-

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berty of the *Preſs Yard*. At that Time *Harry Fiſher* was confin'd in *Newgate*, for murdering his Friend Mr. *Darby* in the *Temple*. Two ſuch Perſons as *Johnſon* and *Fiſher* could not long be confin'd together, without contracting an Intimacy: And after ſome Time, when they became a little better acquainted together, *Johnſon* very freely open'd his Mind to him, and told him of his Intention of making his Eſcape; Says he, Your Caſe is deſperate as well as mine, if we ſtay here, we ſhall be hang'd, and we do but venture our Lives in getting out; *Fiſher* was of the ſame Way of Thinking, and they came into an Agreement of ſharing each other's Fate in the Attempt. The next Thing was to conſult which was the moſt proper Way to put the Deſign in Execution. As they had both the Liberty of the *Preſs Yard* they concluded, that the beſt Way would be to get up to the Top of the *Preſs Yard*, ſo over the Leads upon the Cells, and down into *Phæniz Court*: They were but ſingle Iron'd, each of them; and after having help'd one another up, and got on the Top of the Leads. When they came to ſee the Place they were to leap croſs, *Fiſher*'s Heart fail'd him, and he told *Johnſon* he thought it was impoſſible to do it; but *Johnſon* ſtill urg'd, that it was better to run the Riſque of breaking their Necks there than to ſtay and be hang'd, and reſolutely declar'd he would venture. Accordingly, he leap'd croſs to the Houſe on t'other Side of the Court, and *Fiſher* being animated at ſeeing what *Johnſon* had done, did the like: They got their Irons off by ſome Means or other, and got down into the Court, where they ſhook Hands, wiſh'd each other well, and parted different Ways, *Fiſher* went beyond Sea, where he is ſtill living, as

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it is believ'd, having been in a Merchant's Compting Houſe, as one of the Clerks lately at *Liſbon*, from whence he was forc'd to retire in the utmoſt Confuſion.

Roger being once again at Liberty took up his old Trade of *Preaching the Parſon*, but without his Footman, by himſelf alone, for Fear of being diſcover'd: for his breaking out of *Newgate* had occaſion'd a Reward to be offer'd for apprehending him, or to any one that would diſcover him, and he was ſo well known, that it was morally impoſſible he could be long without being taken; however, he reign'd a conſiderable Time, and went on in his old Way unſuſpected, 'till unlucky for him he went to *Newcaſtle upon Tyne*, and ſtay'd there ſomething too long; for there he was apprehended in the moſt accidental Manner imaginable. For *Perry* and *Jefferies* the then Keeper of the *Poultry Compter*, were down there upon ſome Buſineſs, not in the leaſt thinking of ſeeing their old Friend *Roger*, as he as little thought of being ſo abruptly accoſted by them; for *Perry* and *Jefferies* walking about the Town, went into a Wine Cellar to drink, and while they were drinking a Glaſs of Wine, who ſhould unluckily come down into the Cellar but *Roger* in his Clergyman's Habit dreſs'd very ſpruce: notwithſtanding his Diſguiſe, *Perry* immediately knew him, and ſtarting up the Moment he enter'd the Cellar ſeiz'd him, *Roger* was ſo ſurpriz'd at the Suddenneſs of the Motion, that he was not able to make any Reſiſtance, nor was there the leaſt Probability of an Eſcape; for *Perry* knew his Tricks too well, and therefore took Care to ſecure him effectually; for they had him double iron'd, chain'd under the Horſe's Belly, and brought him to *London*,

don, where they left him with the Keepers at his old Lodging, who were very glad to receive him; but Mr. *Johnſon* met with far different Treatment this Time, from what he met with before; for, inſtead of being ſuffer'd to go into the *Preſs Yard*, he was now ſtrongly iron'd, and carried on the *Common Side*, and even in the very worſt Part of that, the *Stone Hole*, that is a Place under the Gate Way in *Newgate*, where all the moſt miſerable louſy Creatures are put. When *Johnſon* ſaw that they were going to put him there, he made grievous Complaints, and offered any Thing, if he might but go on the other Side, or be put in a better Place: *Roger* begg'd and pray'd heartily that he might; but he had ſerv'd them ſuch a Trick before, that Mr. *Allen* would hearken to nothing, and *Roger* was obliged to comply; ſo that accordingly he was put in the *Stone Hole*, and was very much ſhock'd at his bad Lodging; for when he went in, he was dreſs'd in a very genteel Black Coat, but when he came out in the Morning, he was cover'd all over with white Lice; for in the Morning Mr. *Allen* began to conſider him, he order'd him to be taken out of that diſmal Place: When he came into the Light, he was ſurpriz'd to ſee the Vermin crawling all over him, and it griev'd him ſo that he fell ſick upon it. When he had continu'd ſick ſome Time, his Friends apply'd to Mr. *Allen*, and what with their Perſuaſions, and the Help of a ſmall Purſe, he was prevail'd upon to put him into a cleaner Ward. Soon after that, the Seſſions came on, and he was brought down to his Trial for robbing Mr. *Pitts* on the King's Highway; Every Body thought it would go hard with him, but *Roger rapp'd* it off, as they call it; that is, he had got a Set of Peo-

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ple to ſwear falſely in his Behalf, and by that Means he was acquitted. The World was very much ſurpriz'd at his getting off, knowing what a Life he led, and what a Character he bore: However, the Government thinking him a dangerous Perſon, and not fit to be truſted with Liberty, ſince he could make no better Uſe of it; ſo that he was detain'd as a Debtor at the Suit of His Majeſty, upon an Extent, iſſuing out of the *Exchequer* for defrauding the Revenue. He was then remov'd from the *Common Side*, and put on the *Maſter Debtors Side: Johnſon* having now no Hopes, or at beſt but very ſmall, of being reſtor'd to his Liberty, ſet himſelf to work to contrive the beſt Way he could to cheat and defraud Mankind within the Gaol, ſince he could not do it without; and accordingly, as if Fortune had favour'd his villanous Intentions, a Tallow Chandler happen'd to be confin'd on the Maſter Debtors Side, and he once mentioning the making of Mold Candles in *Newgate*, *Roger* took the Hint, and immediately got great with the Tallow Chandler, who inſtructed him in the Art of making Candles; *Roger* did not uſe to boggle at any Thing, or make any Delays, but immediately furniſh'd himſelf with Molds, and all Manner of Materials for making Candles, and accordingly fell to work. He at firſt made but a ſmall Quantity, but finding the Profit they brought in, he increas'd his Number, and continu'd making large Quantities by which he got a great Deal of Money; the poor Tallow Chandler, who had let him into the Secret of making them, expected that he ſhould reap ſome Benefit by it, but no ſooner had *Roger* got it from him, that ſo far from making any grateful Return, he took all Opportunities of uſing him ill.

ill. This Behaviour of *Roger*'s ſo nettled the poor Man, that he reſolv'd to ſend Notice of *Roger*'s making Candles to the Commiſſioners, which finding no Civility from him, nor his ill Uſage alter'd in the leaſt, he at laſt did, and upon receiving the Meſſage, the Commiſſioners immediarely ſent a *Poſſe* of their Officers to *Newgate*, and ſeiz'd all *Roger*'s Tools and Implements: And not only that but told him, they would ſue him for the Penalty for defrauding the King of his Duty, *Roger* calmly replied, *Deſire the King to place it to my Account, for I ſhall pay him all together.*

Being thus broke for a Candle Merchant, he took up a new Trade, *viz.* of ſelling Brandy and Rum to the Priſoners, and with this he did pretty well for ſome Time, till he grew ſo bad at laſt and impoſed upon the Priſoners ſo much that the Keeper would let Him continue there no longer, but made him go over to the Common Side; but *Roger* would not be ſtill yet, but would play at ſmall Game, rather than ſtick out; for whilſt he was there, tho' he could not ſell Brandy and Rum, becauſe the poor Wretches there could not reach the Price of it, yet they could may be raiſe enough to purchaſe a Dram of Gin, ſo that *Roger* who loved to be doing ſomething took up the Trade of a Gin Merchant, and that he continued a good while, until he was made a Partner with One of the People within Side the Gate; there he found his Gin turn'd but to little Account, got togethrr ſome of the wickedeſt ſet in the Place and when any Body went in to ſee the Priſoners they'd get them to play at Dice, and then with Loaded Ones trick them of their Money, or gat a Needle Caſe, and Cheat them by that Juggle; after he had ſtaid there a long Time what with

Friends

Friends and Money together, he obtain'd the Privilege of keeping the Tap.

We are now to behold *Roger* in his height of Ambition, for when he had got the Tap he did as it were govern the whole Goal *Roger*'s Word, was a Law, and all the reſt of the Priſoners ſtood in fear of him; he tried the Thieves (as they call it) before they were carried down to the Seſſions Houſe to be tried, that is, he ſate as Judge. The Priſoner told him the Truth of the Fact, and what he imagin'd would be ſwore againſt him, *Roger* then told him what to ſay, what Evaſions and Doubles to make, and told him whether he would come off or not: He behav'd ſo well latterly, having ſuffer'd for the contrary ſo much before, that he contributed as much as any Body to keep *Newgate* in proper Order: And whoever went to ſee any of the Priſoners, where he was, might come and go unmoleſted, and be us'd civilly while they were there, and without Danger of loſing any Thing, and that *Roger* piqu'd himſelf upon; for a Gentleman once, who went to ſee a Smugler there, being unacquainted with the Ways of *Newgate*, was apprehenſive he ſhould loſe his Hat and Wig, or ſomething, every Step he took, and after he had been there ſome Time feeling in the wrong Pocket, and not finding his Handkerchief, cried out, that he had loſt it, ſince he came there. *D--n you, Sir*, ſays Roger, *do you come hither to abuſe us? Do you think there are any Thieves in* Newgate?

But the moſt parricular Thing that he did, and which was a Sort of an Atonement for ſome of his paſt Deeds was the bringing *Sarah Malcolm* to Juſtice, which could not have been well done without his Evidence. *Sarah Malcolm* was apprehended for the Murder of Mrs. *Duncomb* in

the *Temple*, ſhe was ſent to *Newgate*, ſtrong Circumſtances of Suſpicion being found againſt her, but ſhe was obſtinate and would confeſs nothing: When ſhe was come to *Newgate*, Mr. *Johnſon*, according to his uſual Cuſtom, took upon him to interrogate her very narrowly relating to the Affair: She anſwer'd him very cautiouſly, which gave him more Reaſon to ſuſpect her, and hearing that Mrs. *Duncombe* was, after her Murder, robb'd of a conſiderable Sum of Money, he began to examine, if ſhe had any Money, and upon ſearching, in the Struggle, ſome Pieces of Gold fell out of her Hair; *Roger* upon this was more curious, and found that ſhe had artfully conceal'd the Money in her Hair; and *Roger* upon her Trial ſwore, that ſhe had *planted the Cole* in her Hair. This being a very ſtrong Circumſtance her having that Money found upon her, and not being able to prove, how ſhe came by it, and other corroborating Evidences appearing againſt her, ſhe was condemn'd and executed. So that we may ſay, Mr. *Johnſon*, from being inſtrumental in bringing ſuch a Wretch to condign Puniſhment, deſerves to have ſome of his Foibles mention'd in a Manner not ſo harſh, as they would otherwiſe have been. And further, that from this Time he ſet a Reſolution to reform the Errors of his paſt Life, and that if ever he got out of that Place he would no more be guilty of the Crimes he had formerly been guilty of, but take up and live a ſober reſerv'd Life, which he manifeſtly did.

As nothing material occurs during his keeping the Tap, we ſhall only ſay, that he got a good Deal of Money there, and liv'd more comfortably than any one can imagine to be in a Priſon, unleſs they have ever ſeen in what Man-

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ner he did live. To paſs over that Time therefore, when the late *Smugling Act* commenc'd, *Roger*, finding himſelf entitl'd to Mercy by a Clauſe in that Act, applied to the Court at a proper Time for the ſame, and it was allow'd: So that at laſt, when he leaſt expected it, he obtain'd his long loſt *Liberty*, but he did not enjoy it long, for what by the Gallantries and Debaucheries of his Youth, and his long Confinement in Goal it brought him into a Conſumption, by which he was reduc'd to almoſt a mere Skeleton before it depriv'd him of Life.

Purſuant to his Intentions of living honeſtly, and ending his Days with *Credit* and *Reputation*, he knew it was proper to apply himſelf to ſome Buſineſs; for tho' he had ſav'd ſome Money, yet not ſufficient to maintain him in the Manner he lik'd, he therefore thinking a *Pawnbroker* the moſt ſuitable to his Inclinations, and a *reputable* Buſineſs, he took a Houſe in *Round Court* in the *Strand*, where ever ſince his Enlargement he follow'd that Trade to the Time of his Death, which was *Aug.* 22. 1740. and after lying three Days, he was carried in a decent Manner to be interr'd in *Derbyſhire*, according to his own Deſire, leaving us to make this Reflection, That Talents which wrongly apply'd are villanous in one Claſs of Life might in another have been of Uſe, and then we may ſay, *What an excellent Lawyer Mr.* Johnſon *would have made!*

F I N I S.

mer he did live. To put over that Time there-
fore, when the Act of Bankruptcy commenc'd,
Roger, finding himself entitl'd to Mercy by a
Clause in that Act, applied to the Court at a
proper Time for the same, and it was allow'd:
So that at last, when he least expected it, he ob-
tain'd his long lost Liberty; but he did not enjoy
it long, for what by the Gallantries and Debau-
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in Goal it brought him into a Consumption, by
which he was reduc'd to almost a mere Skeleton
before it depriv'd him of Life.

Partiant to his Intentions of living honestly,
and ending his Days with Credit and Reputation,
he knew it was proper to apply himself to some
Business; for tho' he had sav'd some Money,
yet not sufficient to maintain him in the Manner
he lik'd, he therefore thinking a Perukeyer the
most suitable to his Inclinations, and a reputable
Business, he took a Shop in Round Court in the
Strand, where ever since his Enlargement he fol-
low'd that Trade to the Time of his Death,
which was May 22, 1710, and after living three
Days, he was carried in a decent Manner to be
interr'd in Derbyshire, according to his own Di-
rection, leaving us to make this Reflection, That
Talents which wrongly apply'd are villanous in
one Class of Life might in another have been of
Use, and then we may say, What an excellent
Lawyer Mr. Johnson would have made!

THE END.